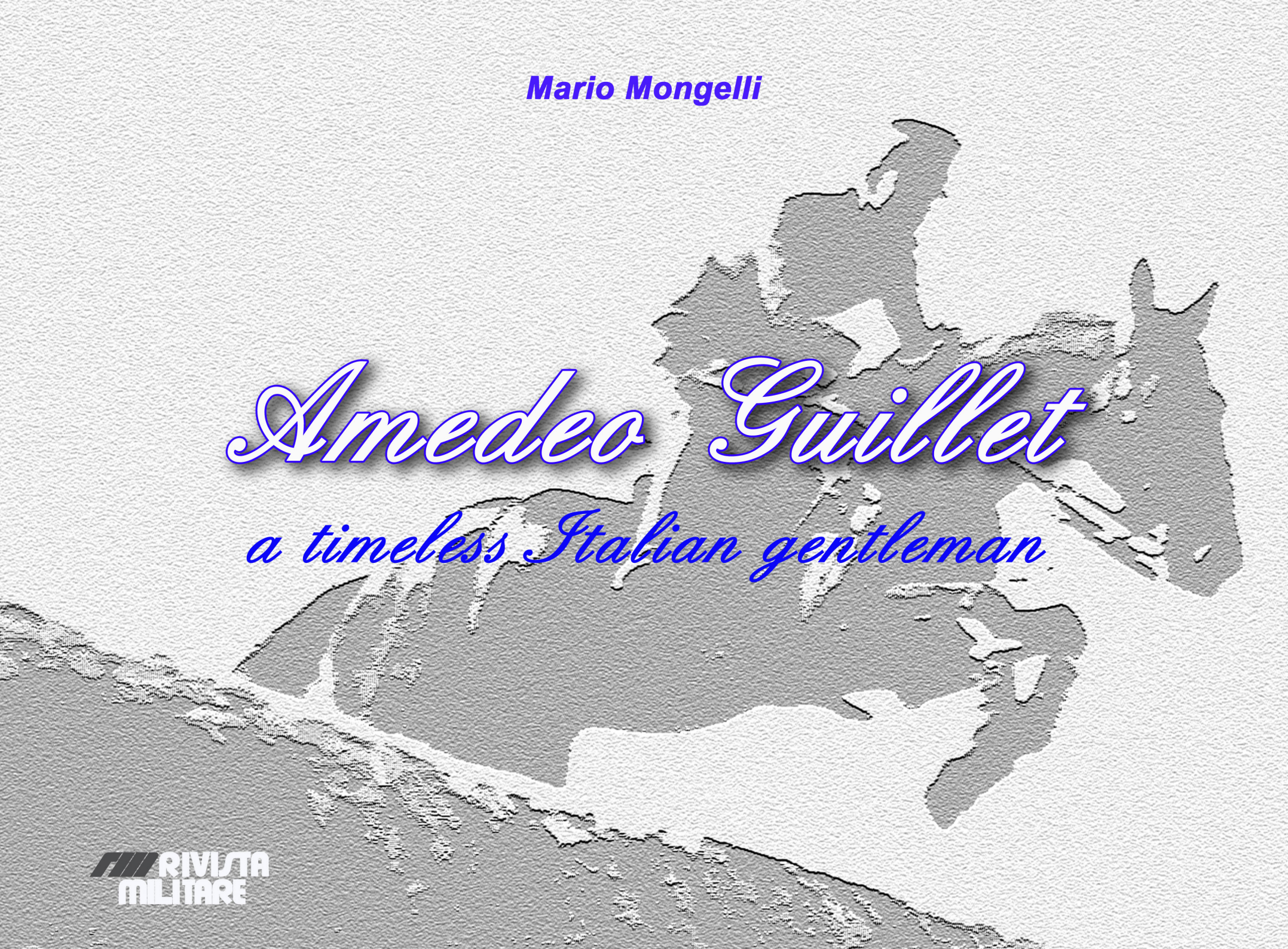


Mario Mongelli



Amedeo Guillet

a timeless Italian gentleman

Colonel (ret.) Mario Mongelli, Italian Army,.
Was born in Rome. He graduated in Foreign
languages at the University of Naples. He
served with the Mountain Brigade "Orobica",
the Army Staff Transport battalion, the
NATO Defence College and the Land Arma-
ments General Directorate.

Editing coordinator:
Luigi Cerbo

Graphics:
Ubaldo Russo

Translation by:
Holly Ann Ruggiero

Original title:
Amedeo Guillet, gentiluomo italiano senza tempo



Editor in Chief
Marco Ciampini

© 2007 - 2009
All rights reserved

Photographs: private files of General Amedeo Guilett

*Remembering gratefully
Lieutenant Renato Togni*

Amedeo Guillet
a timeless Italian gentleman

PREFACE

April 21, 2007 General
Amedeo Guillet meets
Lieutenant General
Filiberto Cecchi, Chief
of the Italian
Army Staff.]



I had the opportunity and pleasure to personally meet General Amedeo Guillet when I commanded the Cavalry School in Montelibretti. On that occasion, I desired that the officer cadets attending the course would also have the chance to meet this extraordinary cavalryman. His brief and improvised address brought forth spontaneity and incredible enthusiasm even if the cadets had only barely met him. That's when I discovered the exceptional impact he had on those with whom he had come in contact.

I am in full agreement with the spirit of the message in the following pages which recognize the excellence of a man who splendidly served Italy during peace and war: General Amedeo Guillet, an Italian gentleman beyond time. This last definition seeks to represent those who, like Amedeo Guillet, whether in the past or the future, have or will honour our Nation through their integrity, honesty, altruism, military and civil values; noble gifts combined with the sense of State and national identity. A gentleman is a gentleman regardless of time.

*Lieutenant General Filiberto Cecchi
Chief of the Italian Army Staff*

INTRODUCTION



Amedeo Guillet with
Mario Mongelli.

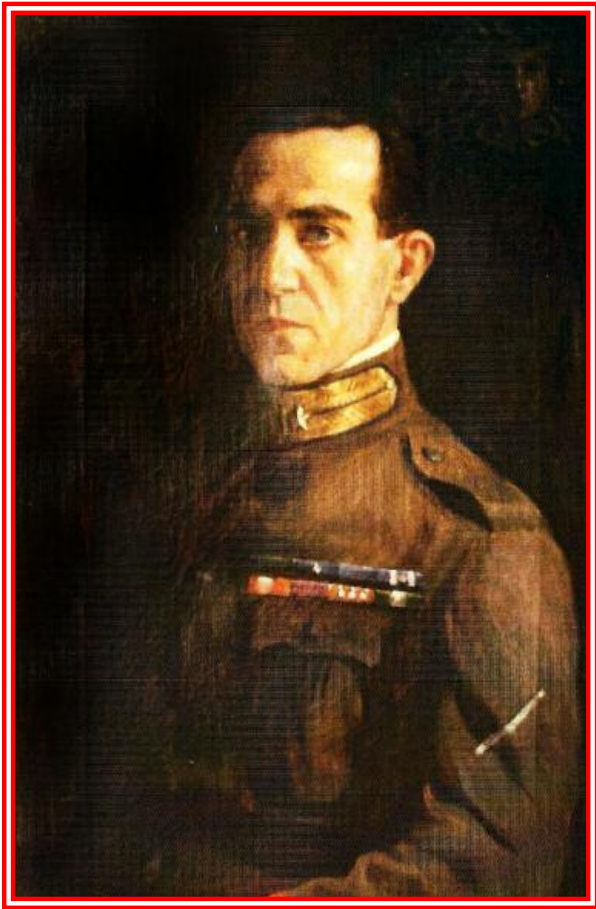
This is not a book. It is a window which opens onto a road spanning 98 years, the road which general, ambassador, baron Amedeo Guillet has travelled up to now. From this window, one sees milestones: the events in which he had been a protagonist or a witness; a ride through nearly a century of Italian history.

For many long years, however, this window had remained closed. The Italian official culture had forgotten about him. It was only thanks to friends, such as journalist Indro Montanelli who wrote about him in 1962, or historian Vittorio Dan Segre with his book "La guerra privata del tenente Guillet" (The Private War of Lieutenant Guillet), and, paradoxically, even thanks to his former British adversaries, such as General Sir William Platt, who had loyally recognized his military valour, that the name of Amedeo Guillet received the merit it deserved. His name was justly included in the Treccani Encyclopedia.

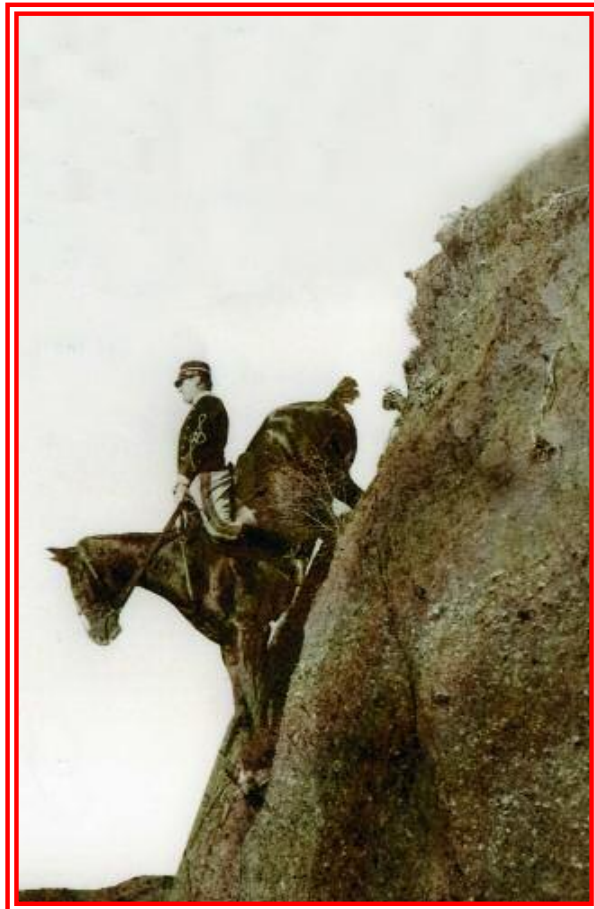
These words are written for all, but especially for those young people who work in either military or civilian positions, since Amedeo Guillet knew how to shine as a soldier as well as diplomat.

As we ride along this road, we gradually realize that his true strength was something that potentially exists in every human being; a combination of generosity, altruism, sense of justice and duty, honesty, moral integrity, disdain for opportunism and mean-spiritedness. These were the values Amedeo Guillet listened to when making the most important decisions of his life, whether serving in the military or as a diplomat, an unequivocal sign that the two conditions are perfectly equivalent.

If, after finishing this ride lasting 98 years, the reader finds him or herself personally touched, then the objective will have been achieved. And this will be Amedeo Guillet's umpteenth victory.



Uncle Amedeo, appointed Army general during the First World War.



Uncle Ernesto, cavalry officer, descending with horse by old method

THE EARLY YEARS

Amedeo Guillet was born in Piacenza on February 7, 1909 of an ancient family from the Savoy region. This noble family was composed of baron Alfredo, officer of the Regi Carabinieri, Mamma Franca, and their children Beppino, Maria and Amedeo.

Amedeo spent his infancy and childhood in Piacenza, Bari and Sassari.

At the outbreak of the First World War, his father with his two brothers: uncle Amedeo, appointed army general and uncle Ernesto, cavalry officer, depart for the front. The father is wounded on Mount Podgora. But, instead of completing his period of convalescence at home, he declares himself completely healed so he can be with his Carabinieri at the front.



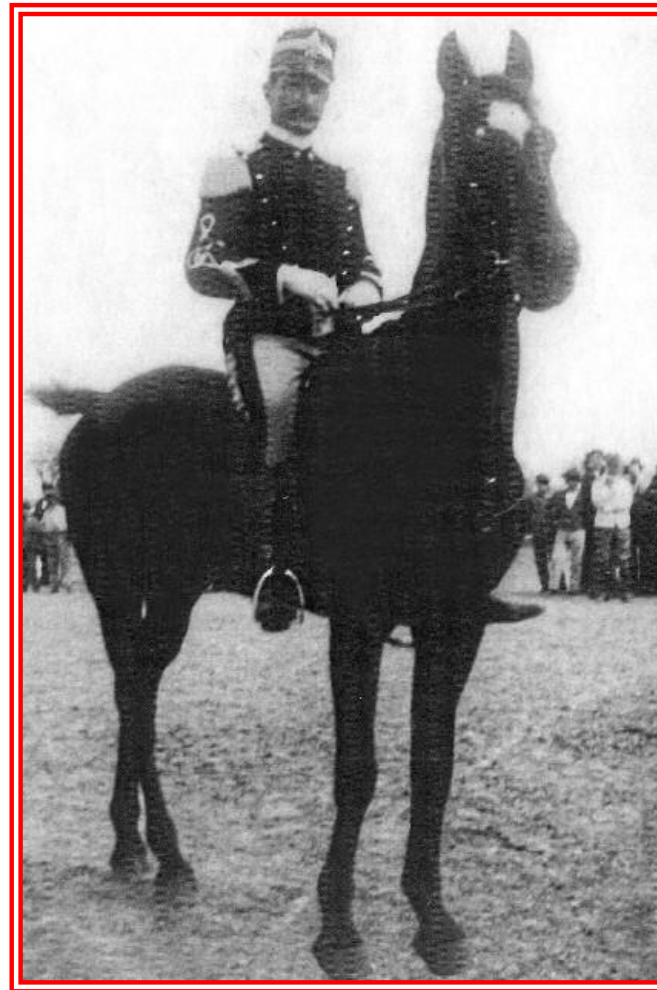
The Guillet family: the father, baron Alfredo, Regi Carabinieri officer, Mamma Franca, and their children Beppino, Maria and Amedeo



1928: Officer cadet at the Military Academy in Modena.



The equestrian skills of Amedeo at three years of age are already demonstrated.

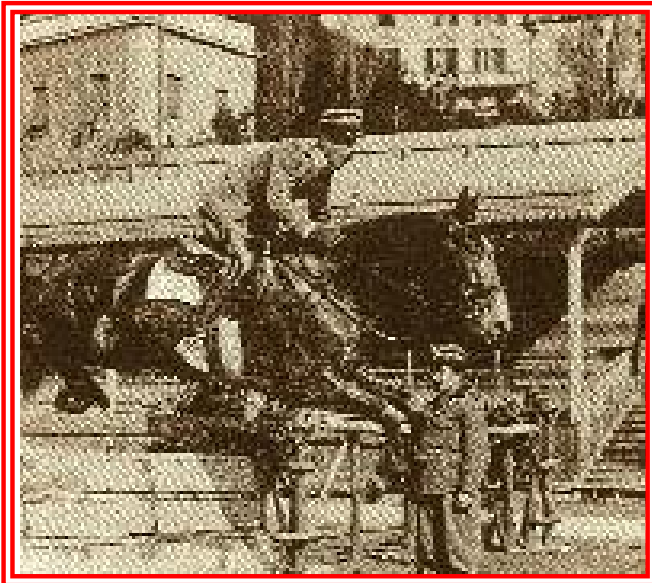


Captain Federigo Caprilli, who, at the beginning of the 20th century, ingeniously and intuitively invented a natural horseback riding method which was later adopted universally.]

The fact that Amedeo Guillet had a predisposition towards horses was evident since he was three years old. At the Military Academy in Modena, in which he entered in 1928, he obviously chose the Calvary branch. He graduated in 1931 as a second lieutenant and was sent to the "Cavallegeri di Monferrato" Regiment for his first assignment. Unfortunately for him, the unit commander was his uncle Ernesto, who, however, did all he could to ensure Amedeo complied rigorously with all regulations: *so that no one could say that the regimental commander favoured his nephew.*

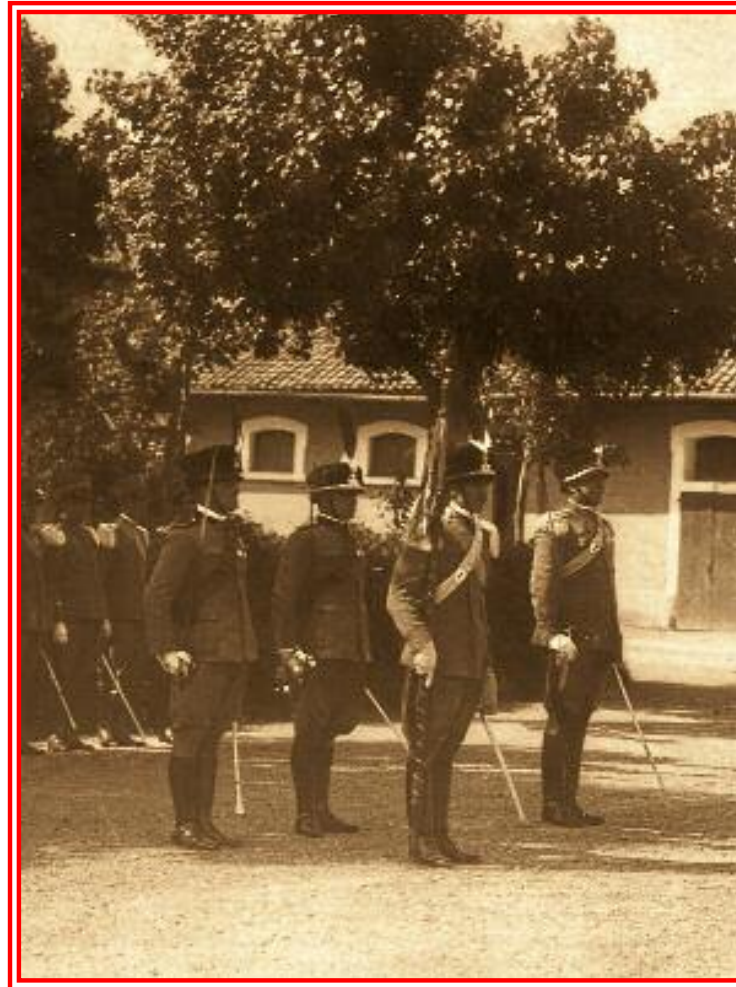
Amedeo Guillet soon demonstrated his qualities as a cavalry officer. He unconditionally adopted Captain Federigo Caprilli's natural horseback riding method which in recent years had literally revolutionized the former riding methods used for centuries. Amedeo Guillet quotes: *"...man is the one who must adapt to the natural possibilities of the horse and not vice versa."*

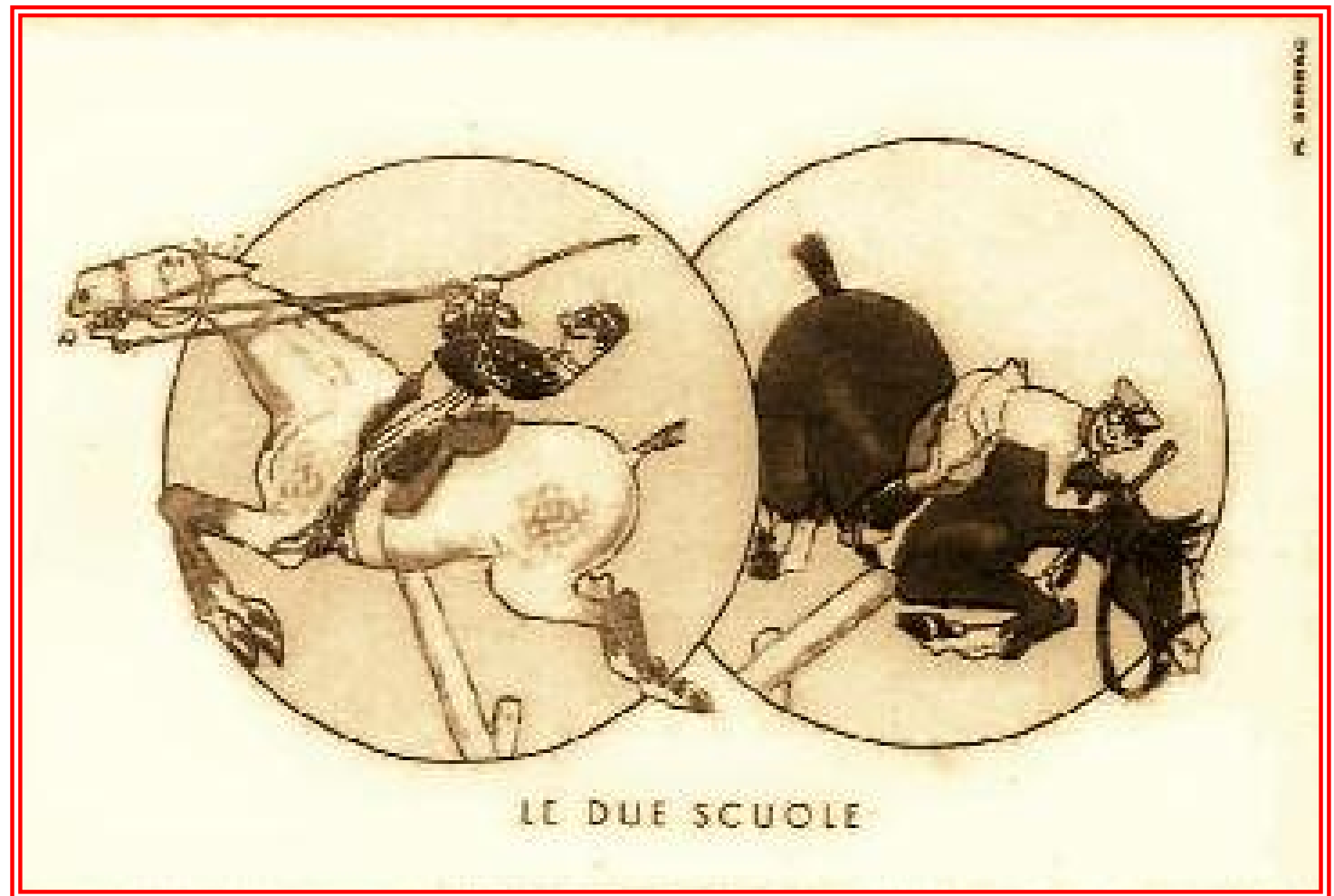
Due to his equestrian excellence, he was included among the four cavalry officers who constituted the Italian Equestrian Team destined for the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Hence, he was sent to Budapest to sharpen his skills. But he never got to Berlin. The Abyssinian Campaign had just begun and Lieutenant Guillet did not hesitate in the least in his choice, as he himself recalls *"... my first duty had always been to serve my country and the war campaign had priority over the Olympics."*



Amedeo Guillet quickly proves to be an excellent horseman in adopting the Caprilli method.

1931: Standard bearer of the "Cavalligieri di Monferrato" Regiment.

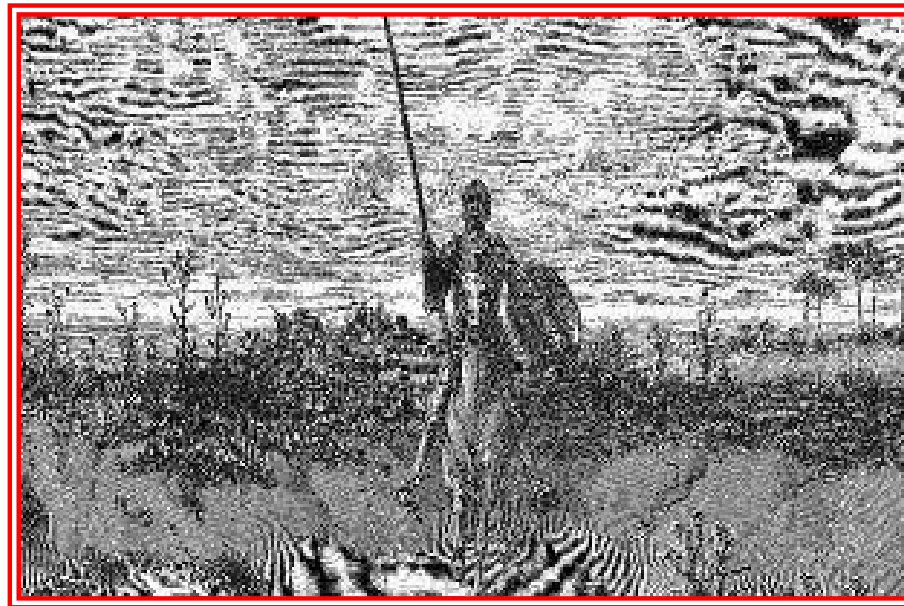






Calvary Second Lieutenant.

Don Quixote de La Mancha, central figure
in the life of Amedeo Guillet. He personi-
fied all the ethical principles of the
Calvary: moral integrity,
generosity, altruism, courage.



Without a doubt, one figure who had always been present, indeed who had entered discreetly and firmly in the pages of Amedeo Guillet's life, was Don Quixote. For a strong majority of self-styled intellectuals, Don Quixote has been considered a ridiculous figure, even as of today. For the more charitable, he is a grotesque being, a character to laugh at. For the more serious, he is an insane visionary, an example to avoid following. *Guys, don't do as Don Quixote does. Use sound practical judgement; do care about durable goods and money; and most of all, don't fight against windmills.*

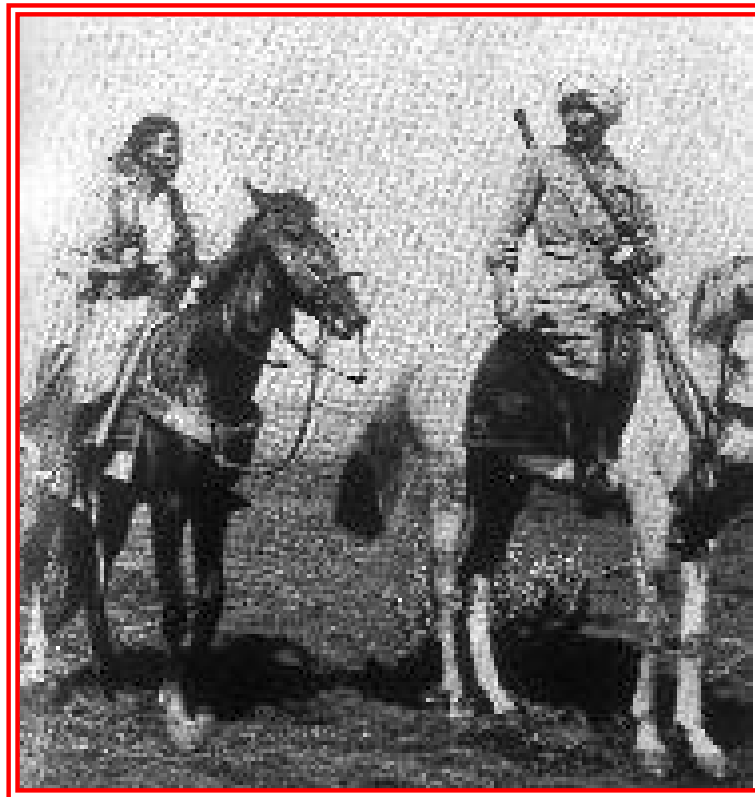
For Amedeo Guillet, that austere mask of a faultless, fearless cavalier was a mirror, after having understood Quixote's profound universal message; a message of integrity and courage despite the blunted spear and the asthmatic mount; a knight who is ready to fight against iniquity, injustice, amorality, and second hand culture; negative things that sometimes deceptively appear to be useful things for mankind, such as windmills.

Amedeo Guillet believes in Don Quixote, as he likes to remember, *"...for his faith in the principles of justice, honesty and altruism, condensed in the rules of Chivalry."*



Beatrice Gandolfo, noblewoman from Capua, Amedeo Guillet's fiancée.

Lieutenant Guillet during operations in Abyssinia. His left hand was wounded during combat.



Putting the Olympics behind him, Amedeo Guillet obtains a transfer to a Spahi unit in Libya. In Zuara, he starts becoming acquainted with Libyan cavalymen and modestly learns the Arab language and culture. In October of 1935, the Abyssinian Campaign begins. On 24 December, Guillet is wounded in the left hand during the battle of Selaclaclà.

During the subsequent months, he takes part in combat until the end of hostilities on May 5, 1936.

In July of 1936, he is decorated in Tripoli by Italo Balbo, Marshal of Italy.

In December, he returns to Italy and gets engaged to Beatrice Gandolfo.

In February 1937, a historic parade in which Beatrice participates dressed in a medieval costume, is held in Naples in honour of Crown Prince Vittorio Emanuele.

In March 1937, in Tripoli, Lieutenant Guillet organizes the equestrian portion of the ceremony in which Mussolini would proclaim himself defender of Islam.

In June 1937, he organizes a parade of Libyan cavalymen in Rome to celebrate the first anniversary of the founding of the Empire. During this event, he meets General Frusci.

In that period, a new rule was passed that government employees who were unmarried would have severe restrictions on their promotions. At this point, Amedeo's marriage plans with Beatrice are halted. He explains the reason: *"...first of all, out of dutiful respect for my fiancée. I didn't want to give her the impression that I would have married her in order to get promoted. So I hoped to earn the promotion based on merit from the war."*

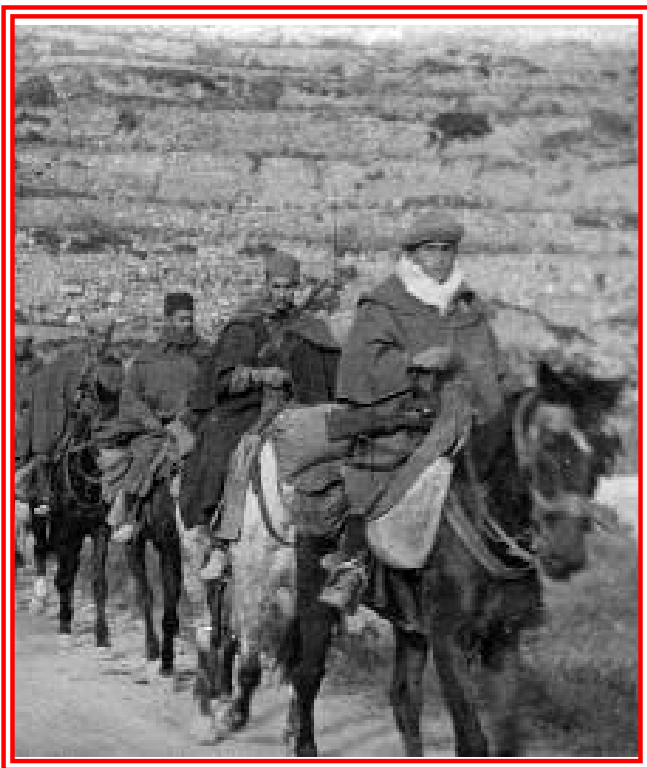
In August of 1937, he accepts General Fusci's proposal to join him in the Spanish Campaign. In Santander and Teruel, he fights with tanks and commands a Tabor of Moroccan cavalymen.

In June 1940, Italy enters into the Second World War.

Spahi from Libya.



A Moroccan
cavalry unit.





Lieutenant Guillet in command of a tank squadron in Teruel during the Spanish Campaign.



Guillet is decorated with the Silver Medal by Italo Balbo in Tripoli.



Duke Amedeo D'Aosta.

Duke Amedeo D'Aosta
receives military honours
from the British.



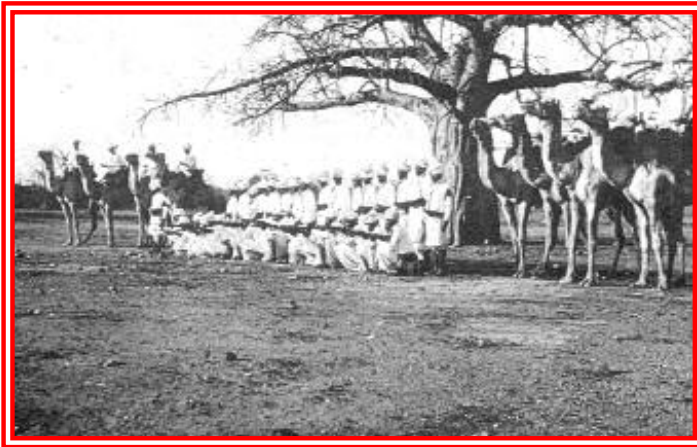
Lieutenant Guillet
reporting to the
Viceroy of Ethiopia,
the Duke D'Aosta.



Between 1937 and 1942, the figure of Amedeo D'Aosta, Viceroy of Ethiopia, emerged in all his noble grandeur. With wisdom and generosity, he gave his all to the Ethiopians and Italians, promoting material progress, morale as well as mutual respect. Unfortunately, it must be mentioned that in the past there were those who openly accused the Duke D'Aosta of making disparaging remarks against some fellow countrymen. Only those who knew him personally and were frequently in his presence, such as Amedeo Guillet, knew how false and malicious these criticisms were. He emphasizes: *"...never, ever would Amedeo D'Aosta lower himself to pronounce one single negative word against any Italian, especially in front of other foreign citizens."*

Despite the huge task of defending the Empire with insufficient means, he courageously faced the enemy head to head for eleven months. With the odds against him, the Duke ended the fight at Amba Alagi on May 19, 1941. Following his surrender, he received the military honours from the enemy who chivalrously commended his valour.

He died in a POW camp as a soldier among his soldiers.

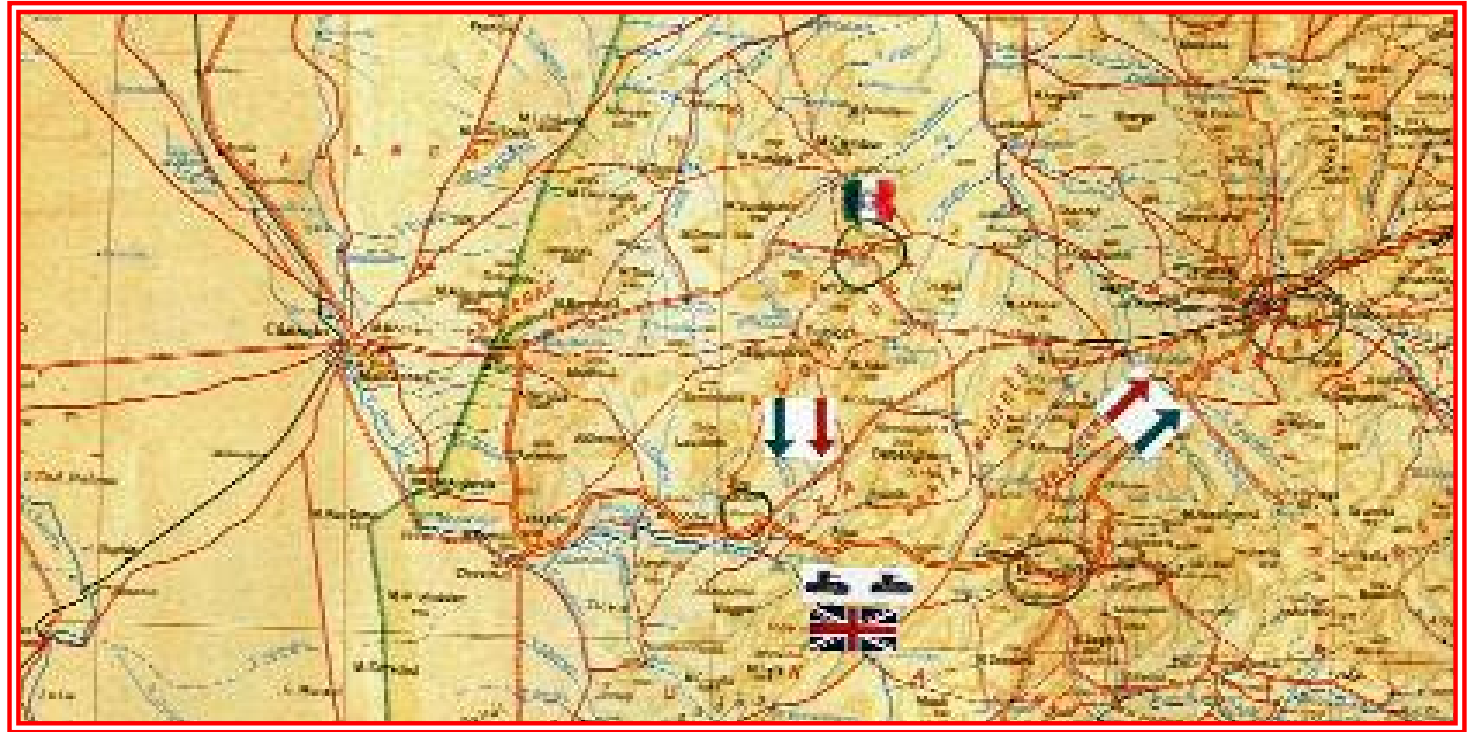


Top left.
Camel unit from the Amhara
Band Group.

Above.
Lancers from the Amhara
Band Group.

Amhara Band Group, Eritrean
cavalymen.

1940 - 1941 WARFARE IN ERITREA



Just prior to the beginning of the conflict, Amedeo Guillet was appointed as the Commander of the Amhara Band Group by General Frusci, the Governor of Eritrea. This group was composed of a total of 1700 men from Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Yemen led by Italian officers. As the unit was comparable to a regiment it should have been commanded by a colonel, but Guillet was only a lieutenant! General Frusci's respect and trust filled him with pride. The Group's objective was to operate with total autonomy against the enemy in the northwest region of Eritrea.



Top left.
Sandor, the legendary grey "Arabian" horse ridden by Lieutenant Guillet during all battles on African soil right up to the last charge in the history of cavalry in Africa.

Above.
The Band's armed squadrons conduct a charge in Cherù.]

Left.
Eritrean cavalryman of the Amhara Band Group.

On the evening of January 20, 1941, Lieutenant Guillet returns to the fort in Cherù after a long and exhausting but unsuccessful search for the enemy. All he and his band would like is to have a meal and rest but they don't have time. The fort commander, General Fongoli, asks them to leave in just a few hours to fight the British "Gazelle Force" who were about to capture thousands of Italian troops retreating towards Agordat. The band had to hold off the enemy along the road running from Aicotà to Barentù for at least a day.

Lieutenant Guillet rejoins his men. A few hours later, at dawn of the 21st of January, the band of fighters is deployed behind the unsuspecting enemy.

He charges with eight hundred cavalymen creating confusion among the terrorized Anglo-Indians.

He avoids being surrounded thanks to Lieutenant Togni's charge. Moments later, Amedeo Guillet leads another charge disrupting the British formation. Guillet's charge was deemed a victory because the objective of the attack had been achieved. The Italian troops, in the meantime, safely reach their retreat destination without problems.

Lieutenant Guillet's charge was the last cavalry charge conducted in the military history of Africa.



Lieutenant Renato Togni, recipient of the Gold Medal for Military Valour (posthumous), whose heroic charge saved the rest of the Group as well as the life of his commander and friend, Amedeo Guillet. He led the charge ahead of his thirty "Marescialli". All but one lost their lives.

LIEUTENANT TOGNI'S CHARGE

The second to last charge was led by Lieutenant Renato Togni, the Group Vice Commander and Amedeo Guillet's friend. That day was Togni's 28th birthday. As soon as he had returned to the starting position from which he launched his first successful attack, Togni was ready for the next charge. He suddenly realized that the British had changed tactics: they had positioned three "Mathilda" tanks on the field ready to fire at the back of his commander. Realizing the mortal danger, he sent a messenger to Lieutenant Guillet warning him of the situation. In his brief message, he informed Guillet that he would immediately lead a charge against the British with his thirty "Marescialli", a humorous allusion to Napoleon's marshals, assuring him that he would do his duty. He was acting in accordance with the words from the Gospel of John: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

One can picture Lieutenant Togni with his hat askew and that proud, calm but challenging gaze. He looks at his thirty indigenous "marshals," everyone of them volunteers for that operation. They exchange glances full of meaning and full of life, well aware of what awaited them. When Lieutenant Togni orders: "...CHARGE!" All proceed as one single man against the tanks whose weapons in that moment are aimed low for their descent along the banks of the wadi. But the Indian infantry fire provides them no escape. Lieutenant Togni rides his horse into a tank turret and is killed. Moved by this scene, the good Lord surely permitted Lieutenant Togni and his grey "Arabian" horse to gallop through the prairies of Heaven.



Italian troops retreating
from Agordat



Eritrean Ascaris assault
against the British positions
at Cheren.

Following the Cherù charge, Amedeo Guillet participated as the protagonist in the Battle of Cochen, while on foot along with the rest of his Group. Due to his personal and timely action, Guillet saved at least 1500 Italian soldiers retreating from Agordat from falling into a trap set by the British. Finally, Guillet is promoted to captain for merit of war.

He fought on foot at Teclesan, the last battle before the fall of Asmara which occurred on the first of April 1941. That day, Guillet understood that the only way to help the Italian troops operating in North Africa was to keep as many British troops as possible busy in Eritrea. Thus he made his decision: if the government in Rome were to order a surrender, he would continue the war on his own echoing the proud words of Nestor, King of Pilo on the beaches of Troy, "And I fought on my own account "

Ascari from a border guard unit.



Former Ascari from the Amhara Band Group during the guerrilla war, with their commander, Captain Amedeo Guillet.

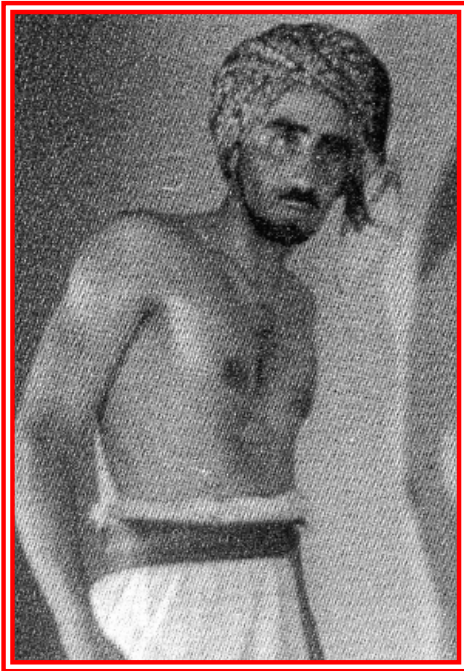
In 1941, from April 3rd to the end of October, Captain Guillet conducted a tough guerrilla war against the British. After the rumor that the "Cummandar es Sciaitan," the devil commander, as his Ascari nicknamed him, had returned to action, approximately one hundred of his former soldiers gathered around him. Knowing full well that they would not be paid, but rather, would be exposed to danger without the protection of a uniform, they agreed to participate in the clandestine fight. They would fight under the commander who had a ransom on his head for one thousand gold sterling. He was never betrayed. There was never even a single deserter.

The guerrilla warfare of Captain Guillet cost the British dearly. For nearly eight months, he attacked depots and railroad convoys, blew up bridges and rendered insecure the lines of communication. Nevertheless, towards the end of 1941, his ranks were too sparse and the mission objective was no longer attainable. He assembled his skeleton Band of less than thirty elements. He thanked those honest and loyal men, promising them that they would be compensated should the Italians ever return to Africa.



After the Band had been disbanded, Amedeo Guillet hid himself in the outskirts of Massaua and assumed the identity of Ahmed Abdallah al Redai, a Yemenite labourer. He became an authentic Arab. While seeking refuge in Yemen, he survived by working as a longshoreman, night guard, and water vendor. Followed by his loyal Yemenite ex-soldier, Daifallah, he attempted to cross the Red Sea the first time on a smugglers' sambuco boat. But at the hand of these thieves, they were tossed into the sea and left stranded in the Eritrean desert. At the point of death, they were rescued by a camel driver who hosted them in his hut.

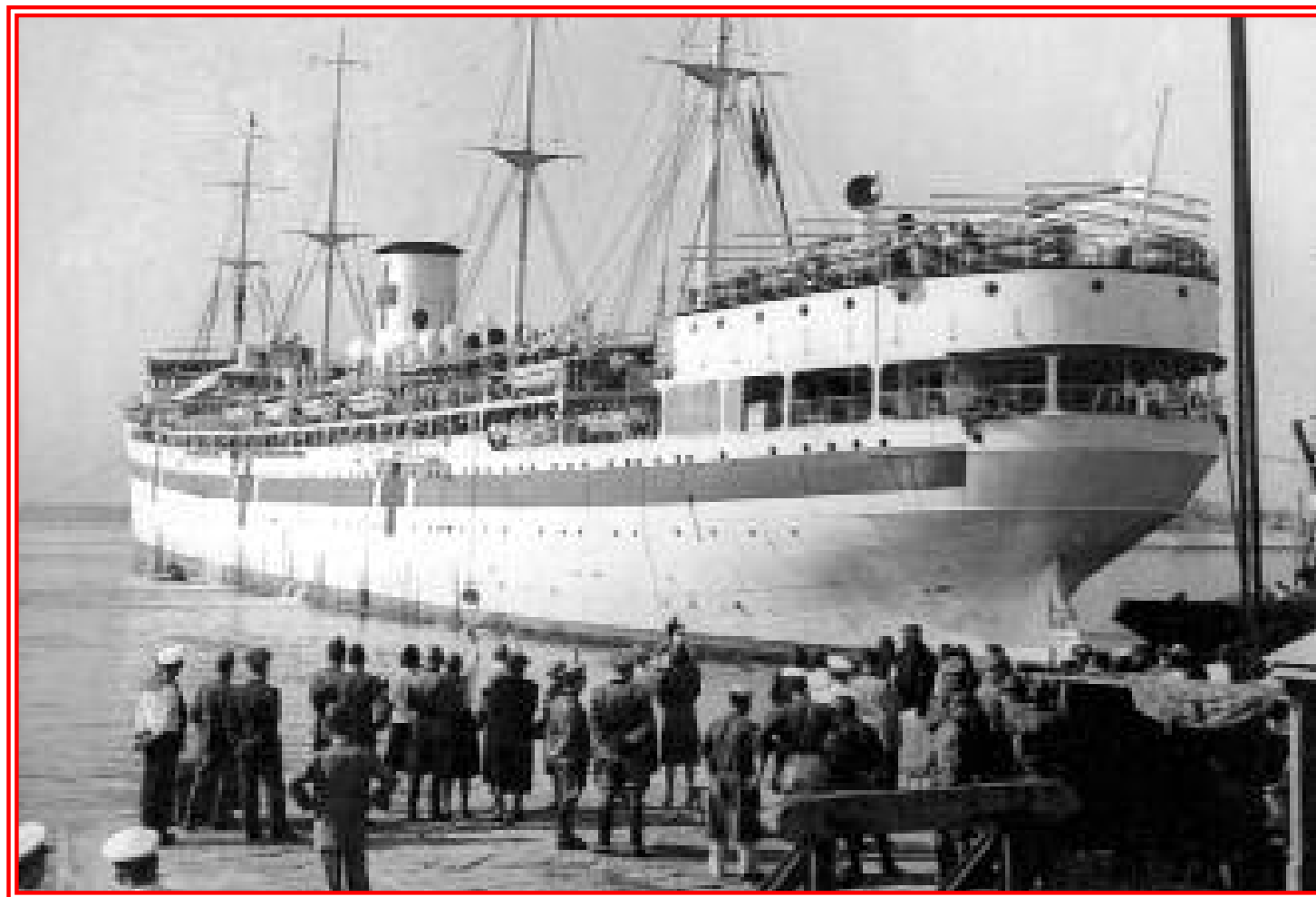
A short time later, Amedeo Guillet and Daifallah attempted to cross the Red Sea again. Deceiving the British, they succeeded in getting a British pass for Yemen. The crossing went without a hitch until they arrived at Port Hodeida. Suspected of being a British spy, Amedeo was thrown into prison, sinking into the depths of maximum human degradation. He was freed by Imam Yahiah with whom he befriended, becoming the tutor of Imam's children. He spent over one year with this family. Then, in June of 1943, with the help of Imam, Guillet returns to Massaua. Bluffing the British a second time by pretending to be mentally ill, he was able to board an Italian Red Cross ship. After nearly two months, circumnavigating Africa, Captain Guillet arrived in Italy just in time to experience the 8th of September in Rome.



1941. Disguised as a Yemenite Arab, he endured many adventures in obtaining refuge in Yemen.

The Sambuco boat on which Amedeo Guillet crossed the Red Sea to take refuge in Yemen.





The Italian Red Cross
hospital ship on which
Amedeo Guillet returned
to Italy.



His Majesty, King Vittorio Emanuele III.



September 1944. Wedding Day.

The imperial crown of
Haile Selassie
recovered by Major
Amedeo Guillet.



Immediately following the armistice, Guillet crossed enemy lines and arrived in Brindisi where he offered his services to His Majesty, King Vittorio Emanuele III. The King assigned him to the Military Intelligence Service in the reconstructed Italian Army. Now promoted to major, he fulfilled his dream of marrying Beatrice Gandolfo on September 21, 1944. He continued his work in the Military Intelligence Service.

After April 25, 1945, as a secret agent, he succeeded in recovering the imperial crown of the Negus of Ethiopia which the "Garibaldi" Brigade as part of the Resistance had confiscated from the Republic of Salò. Even the British had been hunting for the crown but Amedeo Guillet beat them to it.

The crown was returned to the Negus generating the first important step toward peace between Italy and Ethiopia.



His Royal Highness, Prince Umberto,
Viceroy of the Kingdom during the
co-belligerent conflict
in the area of Montelungo.



Heraldic coat of arms
of the Guillet family

RESIGNATION

June 2, 1946 was the referendum vote: Monarchy or Republic. The latter won by a small margin. Standing behind his family motto, "*Fides et Fidelitas*," Amedeo Guillet resigned from the Army. He, then, immediately presented himself to His Majesty, King Umberto II. He thought he would have been praised for his resignation but, instead, he was reproved, as he himself remembered "... *you were wrong to resign. Remember that before there is me, there is Italy. And you must tell your brother to remain in the Army because the Army belongs to Italy as a primary means to safeguarding our independence.*"

THE DOCUMENT

The written document which we have reproduced on the following page is the report signed by General Guillet in reference to the organization and operations conducted by the Horseback Band Group that he himself had created and commanded.

*Finishing all activities - aggressive
all groups Band a camel caravan - Sudanese War. A.O.I.
1940-1941.*

Synthesis of the operational activity of the Amhara Horseback Band Group.
Northern Theatre of Operation (A.O.I.) 1940 - 1941

In February of 1940, I had the task of forming the Horseback Band Group in Gondar. Given the possibility of an imminent war, a combat instrument needed to be created out of the Group with the specific characteristics of training, autonomy, aggressiveness and mobility. Since mobilization between zones of the subject area had already occurred, I enlisted men by personally travelling to all the countries which were formerly rebellious or conquered and signing up volunteers. I even enlisted Arabs from Yemen and Saudi Arabia in the same manner. The horses as well as camels used for riding and those for carrying cargo were selected and bought from the local markets. Once the war was finally declared, training was completed by marching from Gondar to Asmara using ordinary roads and crossing through rebel areas. At the outbreak of war, the Group showed up at the front of the northern theatre of operations, as a fully prepared instrument of war composed of 8 Bands comprising 800 cavalrymen, 400 infantrymen, 200 meharisti (camel cavalry men), a machine-gun section, an anti-tank section, and pack-transport, for a total of 1700 men.

From the very onset of hostilities, the Group took an active part in the campaign, conducting extremely bold raids at and beyond the Sudanese borders. The unit was reputed as being completely reliable due to its high risk undertakings and its ability to furnish precious information on the enemy and the direction they were marching.

By the beginning of 1941, the Band Group was situated over the Sudanese border receiving General Fongoli's orders to attack the advance guard of the British field army advancing toward Eritrea, in order to

give the 41st Brigade, located outside our lines of resistance, time to withdraw to Fort Cherù. At dawn on the 21st of January, the Amhara Band Group launched a skilful manoeuvre around the British advance guard which was superior in number and equipment, composed of motorized and mechanized units and commanded by a brigadier general.

Deftly exploiting ground resources and carefully and shrewdly moving on foot or by horse, the Band Group kept the enemy engaged for an entire day, forcing them to change marching directives, thereby giving the battalions, already cut off, time to withdraw to the fort with hardly any losses. At the end, the Group charging with superhuman audacity such as recalled in the most epic legendary traditions, passed through artillery fire and a British infantry regiment which was finally forced to withdraw. The enemy paid tribute to the group for their bravery. On this day, Lieutenant Renato Togni valiantly died while charging with hand grenades against the British tanks (See report).

With its mission accomplished, the Band Group returned to friendly lines during withdrawal from Cherù, decimated but not thwarted. During our new withdrawal, the Group allowed itself to be cut off in order to recuperate the wounded and stragglers, who the Group protected and reinstated to combat duty on the new lines at Agordat in just a few days.

During the defence of Agordat, the Band Group refused to be replaced and thus formed an assault unit by order of Col Lorenzini. Sent to Cochen-Damtai, the Group encountered the enemy. Giving the enemy's direction of attack, the Group continued battling beyond normal limitations, suffering heavy losses until the 16th and the 11th Brigades joined them. Together they

fought until Agordat fell. Under orders to gather the stragglers from the various units in withdrawal, once again, the Group allowed itself to be cut off from the new lines. Since they were perfectly familiar with the roads and caravans, the Group escorted entire units on convoy, bringing them to safe by travelling five days through mountainous roads the enemy had no knowledge of.

On the Cheren line in mid-March, the Band Group was assigned the Ghergher sector, from which the Group dominated the Mansura plain and defended its position with daring surprise attacks.

After the fall of Cheren, the unit was sent to Teclesan for the extremely difficult defence of Asmara. With repeated attacks and desperately extreme endurance, the Group secured positions that had previously been lost and defended the 52nd kilometre, a vital point for the defence of Asmara. On March 28th, the rest of the Group attacked the enemy, who was trying to stop their operations, with hand grenades and gas-filled bottles and finally burning three enemy tanks (On that day after the tank episode, Col Borghese died on the line held by the Band Group.)

During the defence of Teclesan, the Amhara Band Group continued to maintain its position despite numerous enemy attacks by driving the enemy back counterattacking with hand grenades.

At the fall of Teclesan and Asmara, the Group, reduced to only 176 exhausted, famished and thirsty men, defended their position once again. On the night of the 3rd of April, the survivors of the Band Group opened the road by launched a surprise attack through the enemy bivouacs, gaining the mountains from where they continuously carried out guerrilla attacks against the enemy's lines of supply.

At the fall of Amba Alagi, the remaining members of the Band Group, commanded by Captain Guillet disguised as an Arab, conducted effective guerrilla warfare against the British lines of supply until they were without equipment, wounded, and sick. The last of the Group crossed the Red Sea and got themselves to neutral territory in Arabia. From there, Captain Guillet went through a thousand adventures but succeeded in getting back to his country before the armistice.

The Group had had 826 deaths, more than 600 injured since the beginning of the war and no deserters. It was awarded the Gold Medal in memory of Togni's heroism as well as the enemy's admiring praise in the British Staff official reports.

Amadeo 2 luglio 1949
Rome 2 July 1949

Cavalry Major
Amedeo Guillet
Amedeo Guillet



Top Left.
1954: In Cairo with
President Nasser and
Ambassador Prunas.

Above.
1962: Ambassador in
Amman presenting his
credentials
to King Hussein.



Left.
1955: The Imam of Yemen,
Abdallah.

THE DIPLOMATIC CAREER

Having left the Army but deciding to continue to serve his country, Amedeo Guillet, who had a degree in Political and Colonial Sciences, choose a diplomatic career. He choose the main gate to enter into this career, explaining: "...I was proposed to take advantage of special rules that would have allowed me to gain entrance into the diplomatic career without competition. I preferred the public method of competition because I believed it to be more correct."

In 1947, at the age of 38, he begins his new career.

1950: He is in Cairo with Ambassador Prunas.

1954: He is Chargé D'Affaires in Yemen. The son of the old Imam welcomed him warmly telling him in Arab, "*You have finally returned home, Ahmed Abdallah!*"

1962: He is Ambassador in Amman. He was so appreciated, that King Hussein called Amedeo "uncle", an expression of utmost deference and at the same time one of familiarity in the Arab culture.

1967: He is Ambassador to Morocco, a very delicate position which had to be run with considerable skill and discernment. During a reception, he found himself involved in a shooting caused by an attempted *coup d'etat*. Due to his military experience, he saved the lives of many diplomatic colleagues who were under fire on that occasion. In appreciation, the Federal Government of Germany awarded him the Republic's Grand Cross with star and stripe of the Order of Merit.

1971: He is Ambassador to India. He immediately earned the trust of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who considered him one of the very few diplomats in whom she could confide.

1975: He retires.

2000: He is received with honours by the Eritrean President at Asmara.

2001: The President of the Republic, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, awards him the Great Cross of the Military Order of Italy, the top Italian military honour.

April 21, 2007: In his honour, Mario and Cecilia Mongelli organized a reunion with other friends at the Hall of the Bocca della Verità to pay tribute to him. The simple ceremony was honoured by the presence of three Gold Medals for Military Valour. The Chief of the Italian Army Staff, General Filiberto Cecchi, was also present; on behalf of the entire Italian Army he wished to convey respect and affectionate gratitude to a model citizen esteemed by the entire world.



1968. Ambassador to Morocco.



Top right.
1971: Ambassador to India
with Prime Minister
Indira Gandhi.



Right.
Decorated by the President
of the Republic
Carlo Azeglio Ciampi.

THE DIPLOMATIC CAREER



April 21, 2007:
Affectionate applause
for Amedeo Guillet.

EPILOGUE



2007: Amedeo Guillet at Polignano a Mare (Bari).

Many wonder if it is possible to sum up the figure of Amedeo Guillet. Perhaps the answer can be found by paraphrasing the words of Miguel de Unamuno, the great exegete of Don Quixote, when he described his knight of La Mancha: *"Amedeo Guillet was not nor is deluded, nor an idealist; one cannot say, in the strict sense of the term that Amedeo's drive was idealism; he did not fight for ideas; it was spiritualism; he fought for the spirit."*

DECORATIONS AND RECOGNITION

Italian Decorations

Knights Cross of the Military Order of Savoy, 1944
Great Cross of the Military Order of Italy, 2001
Five Silver Medals
War Cross for Military Valour with sword.
Four War Merit Crosses

Foreign State Military Decorations

Cruz Blanca for Military Valour. Awarded by General Francisco Franco, 1937.
Cruz Roja for Military Valor, 1938.
Cruz por la Unidad Nacional Espanola, 1938.
Cruz del Sufrimiento por la Patria, 1938.

Diplomatic Decorations

Grand Officer of the Order of the Nile of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1954.
Grand Cross with star and stripes of the Order of Merit from the Federal Republic of Germany, conferred in recognition of services performed for the German citizens in Morocco, 1968.
Grand Cross of the Order of Alawita of the Kingdom of Morocco, 1971.
Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great of the Vatican City State, 1964.

BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT

- Feb 7, 1909 -Birth in Piacenza.
- 1928-1931 -Military Academy in Modena.
- 1931 -Second Lieutenant (1st appointment) in "Cavalleggeri di Monferrato" Regiment.
- 1934 -Selected to participate in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.
- 1935 -Participates in the Abyssinian campaign.
- 1936 -Receives military decoration from Marshal of Italy, Italo Balbo, in Tripoli.
- 1937 -Participates in operations in Spain.
- 1938 -Returns to Abyssinia.
- 1940 -Appointed Commander of the Amhara Band Group
- 1941 -Commands in Cherù, last cavalry charge in Africa.
- 1941 -From April to October, operates clandestinely against the British.
- 1941 -Promoted to captain.
- 1942 -Amid adventures, takes refuge in Yemen where he remains over a year.
- 1943 -In June uses strategy to embark on an Italian Red Cross ship, circumnavigating Africa.
Arrives in Italy in September.
- 1943 -The King assigns him to the Military Intelligence Service of the reconstituted Italian Army.
- 1944 -Promoted to major. Marries Beatrice Gandolfo in September.
- 1945 -Recovers the Imperial Crown which is returned to Negus Hailè Selassie.
- 1946 -Resigns from the Army.
- 1947 -At 38 years old, wins the competition for a diplomatic career.
- 1950-1954 -Serves in Cairo.
- 1954-1962 -Chargé d'Affaires in Yemen.
- 1962-1968 -Ambassador to Jordan.
- 1968-1971 -Ambassador to Morocco.
- 1971-1975 -Ambassador to India.
- 1975 -Retirement.
- 2000 -The President of the Eritrean Republic received him with honors in Asmara.
- 2001 -The Head of State, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, confers the Grand Cross of the Military Order of Italy.
- 2007 -His name is in the list of entry words of the Enciclopedia italiana Treccani.

Preface	2
Introduction	3
The Early Years	5
Equitation	7
Don Quixote	11
1935 -1940	13
Duke Amedeo D'Aosta	17
1940 - 1941. Warfare in Eritrea	19
The Last Charge	21
Lieutenant Togni's Charge	23
January - April 1941	25
Guerrilla Warfare	27
In Yemen	29
1943 -1945	33
Retirement	35
The Document	35
The Diplomatic Career	41
Epilogue	44
Decorations and Recognition	45
Biographical Accounts	46

**/// RIVISTA
MILITARE**